

THE NEWS AT THE CAPITAL.

THE DEMOCRATS IN PERPLEXITY.

DOUBT FELT AS TO WHETHER THEY CAN ELECT THE NEXT SPEAKER—THE CONTEST TO BE A TRYING ONE—A CHALLENGE BY S. B. CHITTENDEN.

The regular correspondent of THE TRIBUNE at Washington estimates that the Democrats will not have a full quorum of the next House, if a majority of the Representatives of all the districts is to constitute a quorum. The prospect is that there will be an exciting contest for the Speakership. The rush of candidates for the House and Senate offices is very large. Arrangements have been made by Mr. Chittenden to take a legal-tender case into the Supreme Court.

THE SPEAKERSHIP CONTEST.

THE DEMOCRATS NOT SURE OF A QUORUM EVEN—THE ASPIRANTS AND THE GREENBACKERS.

(BY TELEGRAPH TO THE TRIBUNE.)

WASHINGTON, March 5.—The President's proclamation calling Congress together in extra session in two weeks, plunges the Democrats of the House at once into the midst of the contest for the Speakership, and causes them to look about with no little anxiety to ascertain whether they have an actual majority or not.

There have been elected already 147 Democrats. One of them, Mr. Schleicher, has since died, and two of them, Mr. Acklen and Mr. Bland, are sick, with little prospect of their sufficiently recovering to be able to participate in the organization of the House. The casualties, as they say in the army, will reduce the Democratic strength to 144 or three less than a quorum. These figures are not, to be sure, those given out by the Democrats themselves, but those contained in THE TRIBUNE Almanac, and which are not disputed by some of the best informed politicians in Washington. The highest number of Democratic Representatives now living claimed by one whose opinion is well known, is 147 or, deducting the two sick men, 145. This would leave the Democrats with less than a quorum in a full House of 293 members.

And just here arises a very important question which may play an important part in the coming contest. What constitutes a quorum—a majority of Representatives from all the districts, or a majority of those who have been elected? If the former theory is accepted, then the man who is elected Speaker must have 147 votes in order to be sure of an election, because the minority may defeat him by sitting still and destroying the quorum. If the latter theory prevails, then 145 members make a quorum, because no election having yet taken place in California, only 289 Representatives have yet been chosen.

Speaker Grow early in the war made a ruling that seems to sustain this last theory. Mr. Vallandigham having raised the question on account of the absence of Representatives from the Southern States, Mr. Grow said that a quorum of the House consisted of a majority of the members who had been elected, it being a notorious fact that no Representatives had been chosen in the Southern States. Even accepting this as the law, the Democrats will lack one of having a majority in the House on the first day of the session, unless Messrs. Acklen and Bland recover, of which there is little hope, or unless the vacancies in the Western and District of New York and the Border District of Texas are filled, which is impossible.

This condition of affairs causes the greatest uneasiness among the Democrats; and one of the oldest members of the House on that side expresses the opinion to-day that there will be a very sharp struggle, and perhaps a long delay, in organizing the body after it meets. The only way to avoid this is for the Democrats to secure the co-operation of a few of the Greenbackers, who, as the importance of their votes becomes manifest, will probably be less likely to leave their own party without receiving the most substantial consideration. The importance of the question whether the Democrats will be able to organize the next House at all or not, and the intense interest that is felt in it, make the contest between rival Democratic candidates for the Speakership seem of secondary moment.

The two principal aspirants are Speaker Randall and Mr. Blackburn, with the chances decidedly in favor of the former. Mr. Randall's long service in the House, compared with that of his chief competitor, the prestige which his two terms in the chair have given him, and the opportunities he has had to place members of the last Congress under obligations to him, are all in his favor. On the other hand, some of his appointments and some of his rulings have made bitter enemies of a few of the most influential men in his party. The balance is unquestionably in his favor, and he will probably be reflected, unless the regular number of the Democratic party is beaten.

The quiet and determined attitude of the Greenbackers and Nationalists, who are preparing to nominate and support a candidate of their own for the Speakership, adds to the Democratic perplexity. The Greenbackers claim to have twenty-one men pledged to enter their caucus with them; and the number, if they hold together, will be sufficient to make the election of any other than a compromise candidate impossible.

The Republicans number 128 members of the House, and so far as can be foreseen, will be able to bring out their full force on the first day of the session, with the 21 Greenbackers, will make a total of 149 members; a majority of a full House, who, either by combining with a candidate in opposition to the one placed in nomination by the Democrats, or by refraining from voting, can make it possible to prevent an organization until concessions satisfactory to one or both of the two parties are made.

Considerable speculation is indulged in here to-night as to what would be the result, not only in regard to the organization of the next House, but as affecting the future of the Democratic party, should the Nationals persuade Mr. Bright, of Ohio, to enter the contest for the Speakership. Mr. Bright is a prominent soft-money Democrat. He has already served four terms in Congress, is a man of acknowledged ability, and a representative native-born Southern gentleman. Should such a step be taken by the Nationals, and should it result in the election of Mr. Bright, it might go far toward breaking up the solid South on present political issues, and would utterly demoralize the Democratic party, while it would bring again to the front as National issues in 1880 the questions of inflation or contraction, hard or soft money, greenbacks or gold.

AN EXCITING TIME AHEAD.

AN ENORMOUS RUSH OF APPLICANTS FOR OFFICE—ANTAGONISMS AMONG THE DEMOCRATS—THE REPUBLICANS FAVOR A BOLD POLICY.

(BY TELEGRAPH TO THE TRIBUNE.)

WASHINGTON, March 5.—The contest over the approaching reorganization of both Houses and connected matters bids fair to cause such political excitement as has not been witnessed here for many years.

Candidates for places about the Capitol, especially those in the Senate wing, are already appearing in abundance. It is estimated that there will be between 5,000 and 10,000 candidates for positions on the House and Senate rolls by the time Congress meets; and the number will undoubtedly be nearer the latter than the former.

Aside from the question of the spoils, a strong feeling is already beginning to manifest itself over the sharp antagonisms which are inevitably to exist between the Democrats in the Senate and many of those in the House. It is accepted as certain that the State Finance Committee will be under the lead of Mr. Bayard as chairman, and that it will be decidedly a hard-money committee. The House, on the other hand, will contain a large soft-money element, independent of the more extreme Greenback men. It is admitted by many Democrats that the two Houses will differ quite as sharply on money issues as the Republicans and Democrats have differed on general issues between

the parties. The hard-money element in the Senate will favor Randall for Speaker.

The Greenback men are making a great display of confidence. They talk as if both of the other parties were in the minority, and they assume that they will organize the House as a matter of course. They do not as yet receive credit for having any of that courage and endurance which cause men of deep conviction to stand together for principle's sake against all opposition. In fact, quite a number of them are already regarded as quite open to available trades. General Butler, W. D. Kelley and General Ewing are among their volunteer guardians. Butler is bent on holding them together. Kelley thinks he, as a Republican, can secure their votes, and Ewing is credited with believing that he can prevail upon them to act with the Democrats.

The feeling of the Republicans is that so far as the prompt performance of public business of the House is concerned it is important to the country that Randall should be reflected, but in a party sense they will rejoice to see the Democrats make the blunder of trying a new man at this critical time in the life of their party. In the organization of the Senate both the Democratic National and the Congressional Committees are to take part, and the majority of them are in favor of assuming to dictate who shall fill the principal Senate offices. This movement is regarded by some as covering an intrigue for Tilden to offset Bayard's influence as well as that of Thurman. The matter is already raising a lively altercation. The Republicans will be thoroughly united in both branches, and there is a strong hope that both the President and the Republican minority in each House will work energetically together and present a solid front to opposition.

In view of the fact that the Democrats have forced an extra session upon the issue of repealing all laws providing for honest elections, and that their leading issue at the coming session must be the same, there will be a very strong, if not unanimous, sentiment brought to bear on the President by the Republicans to induce him to veto every appropriation bill that comes to him loaded down with the political amendments which those who failed contained. In fact, one consideration which led to fixing the date of the session only two weeks off instead of four, as was at first intended, was that it might be given to pass more than one set of appropriation bills in case it should become necessary before the beginning of the next fiscal year. The strongest Republicans will favor repealing all the laws of appropriation bills if they are found necessary to defeat the dishonest legislation which Democrats are bent upon forcing through, and they will also support the President, if worse comes, to veto the President's message to Congress, to go so far as to make known his views upon the very threshold of the new session, concerning the adding of such legislation as appeared in those bills which have just failed.

NO NEW FAST MAILS.

PLANS FOR AN EXTENSION OF THE PRESENT SYSTEM RELUCTANTLY ABANDONED.

(BY TELEGRAPH TO THE TRIBUNE.)

WASHINGTON, March 5.—An estimate of \$400,000 was sent into Congress at the beginning of the last session for the maintenance and extension of the fast mail system. The appropriation made for this service was \$150,000. With this sum it will only be possible to maintain the fast mails as they now are and extensions and improvements which the department had determined upon must be abandoned. Among the more important of the abandoned plans was one in which the New-York morning press is deeply interested. Arrangements had been perfected for placing a newspaper train similar to those now running from New-York to Philadelphia and Springfield upon the Hudson River Road, leaving New-York at 5 a. m. and connecting at Poughkeepsie with a train which leaves Albany and Troy about 9 a. m., and the interior towns some five or six hours earlier than by the present mail service.

THE RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS.

A VERY PROMPT PUBLICATION OF EVERYTHING WHICH WAS DONE IN THE HOUSE—THE SENATE STORY A LITTLE BEHIND.

(BY TELEGRAPH TO THE TRIBUNE.)

WASHINGTON, March 5.—The promptness with which the reports of the proceedings of the House have been printed in THE RECORD during the last week, when the daily sessions extended far into the night, has been the subject of much favorable comment at the Capitol. Every morning's RECORD contained the proceedings of the House for the previous day up to the time of adjournment unless it sat until the hour when the paper went to press or later, and this morning's issue brings the proceedings down to the final adjournment. On the Senate side, the reports began to get behind about a week ago, and the latest published yet are those of the session of the 21st February night. There has been great inquiry at the Capitol to-day for the official report of the remarkable debate in the Senate during the early hours of Monday morning. The RECORD has announced each day that it would publish all that was received at the printing office.

THE HAPPY THOUGHT OF CHITTENDEN.

THAT GENTLEMEN AND GENERAL BUTLER AGREE TO TEST THE LEGAL-TENDER QUESTION IN THE SUPREME COURT, THE TWO MEN TO PAY THE COSTS.

(GENERAL PRESS DISPATCH.)

WASHINGTON, March 5.—The constitutionality of the Legal-Tender act, so far as it applies to the issue of Government notes in time of peace having the quality of a legal-tender for private debts, is about to be brought to a test in the courts, and, of course, finally in the Supreme Court of the United States, by an agreement between Mr. S. B. Chittenden, member of Congress for the Brooklyn (N. Y.) district, and General Benjamin F. Butler, each gentleman agreeing to bear the costs and other expenses on his side incurred in carrying a case through the lower courts and up to and through the Supreme Court.

The correspondence on the subject between Mr. Chittenden and General Butler forms, it will be seen, an agreement to find a real case in which a debtor shall have offered to his creditor, a citizen of a different State, payment of a debt in greenbacks of date since August, 1862, which is the officially declared date of the close of the war. The creditor is to refuse payment and bring suit, and thereupon Mr. Chittenden will bind himself to bear the expenses of the creditor, and General Butler on his side to defend and defray the costs of the debtor, he asserting the right of the Government to issue legal-tender paper money at all times.

General Butler means to argue the case himself. Senator Edmunds, of Vermont, and Mr. William Allen Butler, of New-York, will manage the case for Mr. Chittenden.

The following is the correspondence on the subject:

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

WASHINGTON, D. C., Jan. 16, 1879.

DEAR GENERAL: I understood you to say yesterday that you believed the Government was constitutionally authorized to issue legal-tender greenbacks, and that you also are willing to antagonize the opposing view in the courts.

I now propose that we seek a suitable test case (which, of course, will be a real one), with the mutual agreement to advance it as rapidly as may be practicable to the Supreme Court for a final decision. If you agree to this, I will invite you to meet my counsel at an early day to confer in respect to the preliminary steps. Very respectfully your obedient servant.

S. B. CHITTENDEN.

It may be made for a friendly suit to bring up the points. Let a note of any person of upward of \$5,000 be presented to him for payment. Let him tender the issue of payment in greenbacks of the issue of 1878, or the issue of any date, and let the Government refuse to accept it. The official date of the end of the war. Let the party holding the note refuse the tender and bring suit. Let the tender be pleaded, state the best interests of the people and for the prosperity of the country. I am very truly yours.

BENJAMIN F. BUTLER.

THE HON. S. B. CHITTENDEN, House of Representatives, Washington, D. C.

Mr. Chittenden says that the currency debates during the first and second sessions of the XLVth Congress convinced him that nothing short of constitutional restraint will save the country from continued and excessive issues of legal-tenders in the future, and that it is hopeless to expect the next Congress to relieve the country from this great peril to its renewed prosperity. In his opinion there is thus a necessity for bringing the question to the final test under the Constitution, by a case on which the Supreme Court will be compelled to decide whether legal-tender paper money in time of peace is constitutional.

In seeking to bring such a case before the courts, Mr. Chittenden says he thought it best to seek for a prominent believer in legal-tender notes to support that side. It will be seen that General Butler handsomely shoulders the responsibility of the legal-tender side of the question.

GLOVER BROUGHT TO NAUGHT.

AN ENIGMATIC REPORT TO GET HIS INVESTIGATIONS INTO PRINT DETECTED IN TIME BY THE REPUBLICANS.

(BY TELEGRAPH TO THE TRIBUNE.)

WASHINGTON, March 5.—Mr. Glover got Mr. Dickey, on Monday, to ask that the great mass of testimony (if it can be dignified by such a name) which he has collected during the last three sessions of Congress in regard to the Treasury Department, and almost every other subject under the sun, be printed. Mr. Glover knew very well that if he asked such a privilege himself it would attract attention and meet with fatal opposition. The permission was granted when the Republicans were off their guard; but the fact having been discovered in time, Mr. Conger moved, yesterday morning, that the order be reconsidered. That motion was not acted upon. Some of Mr. Glover's friends were asserting at the Capitol to-day that the order not having been reconsidered, the great mass of slander must be printed as a public document, but there is good reason to believe that Speaker Randall will decide that the entry of the motion to reconsider suspends the order until that motion is acted upon, which can not be done until the material consists of the stories of discharged employees in the printing and other bureaus of the Treasury, and all of it has been completely answered.

THE ELECTORAL BILL.

THE OBLIGATION IMPERATIVE ON CONGRESS TO PASS SUCH A MEASURE AT THE SPECIAL SESSION.

(BY TELEGRAPH TO THE TRIBUNE.)

WASHINGTON, March 5.—One of the most important questions which Congress neglected to act upon during the session just closed was the bill amending the Presidential election laws. The Senate passed a bill on the subject, but the House not only refused to accept it but neglected to perfect a measure of its own. The extra session of Congress to be held this Spring not only furnishes an opportunity, but places upon Congress the obligation to take some definite action upon this question of transcendent importance. If it is neglected until next Winter nothing will certainly be done, and the Presidential election, with a majority in both Houses the Democrats will have no excuse for not perfecting a bill of amendment. The bill will provide a way for settling electoral disputes in the future. General Butler told the truth in his minority report on the Porter Committee investigation, when he said that a conspiracy to defraud the electors against the law by an Electoral Commission; and there is fear that he was equally right when he said that another dispute like that would lead to force.

AN ORDER ABOUT THE PLAGUE.

SHIPS COMING FROM THE BLACK SEA AND THAT PART OF THE WORLD TO BE SUBJECTED TO CERTAIN RULES.

(GENERAL PRESS DISPATCH.)

WASHINGTON, March 5.—A circular was issued this afternoon from the office of the Surgeon-General of the United States Marine Hospital Service, addressed to officers of the Customs revenue, medical officers of the Marine Hospital Service, and others whom it might concern, in regard to the importation of articles likely to bring the plague. It was as follows:

The Act, approved April 29, 1878, entitled "An Act to prevent the introduction of contagious diseases into the United States," and the amendments thereto, require that no foreign port or country where any contagious or infectious disease exists, nor any vessel conveying such disease, shall be permitted to land at any port of the United States, or pass the boundary line between the United States and any foreign country, except in such a manner as may be prescribed by the Surgeon-General.

Attention has been called to the prevalence of a dangerous epidemic disease in Southern Russia, known as the plague, and which, as manifested in the late outbreak, leaves no doubt that it is similar to, if not identical with the plague which devastated the East in 1871, and which, before the outbreak, of the danger which attaches to ships, and, as carriers of infection, the following regulations are framed, and it is directed that the Surgeon-General of the Treasury, and subject to the approval of the President, for the protection of the health of the people of the United States against the danger of the introduction of the plague.

Until further orders, no vessel from any port of the Black Sea or the Sea of Azov, conveying any plague, diphtheria, cholera, typhoid fever, or any other contagious or infectious disease, shall be permitted to land at any port of the United States, or pass the boundary line between the United States and any foreign country, except in such a manner as may be prescribed by the Surgeon-General.

The vessel disinfected and thoroughly ventilated, and the suspected articles shall be disinfected, either by chemical agents, or by burning, as shall be determined in each case by the Surgeon-General of the Marine Hospital Service, and the vessel shall be subjected to a sanitary examination of health may be accepted as satisfactory evidence of compliance with these regulations on the part of the vessel.

By order of the Surgeon-General of the Marine Hospital Service, E. B. HAYES.

WASHINGTON NOTES.

WASHINGTON, Wednesday, March 5, 1879.

The subscriptions to the 4 per cent loan since yesterday's report have amounted to \$1,009,100.

A dispatch from our Minister to England, dated February 15, 1879, the Department of State has information that all the vessels which have arrived within the quarantine have delivered them in a healthy condition.

The Clerk of the House has received about two-thirds of the certificates of the new members, and others will doubtless be now promptly forwarded. A number of the new members of the House are already in the city.

The Revised Statutes are now being printed by the Secretary of the Interior to-day decided that the St. Joseph and Denver Railroad Company comes within the purview of the Railroad Decision of the 20th ultimo in the case of the Southern Pacific Railroad Company of California, and must, therefore, pay the costs of surveying, selecting and settling the land which is to be taken for the line of the road.

The Secretary of the Interior has decided the case of Thomas Kemp versus Thomas Starr, involving 160 acres, which embrace a considerable portion of the ground upon which the town of Leadville, Colorado, is situated. The Department holds that the land is not within the purview of the act, and that Starr has complied with the mining laws he is entitled to a patent.

A large number of interest in Leadville, and the case of the land disputants has once or twice very nearly resulted in bloodshed.

BRITISH TOPICS.

THE ZULU WAR EXCITEMENT.

THE PUBLIC SATIATED WITH DETAILS OF THE WAR PREPARATIONS—TROOPS VOLUNTEERING EAGERLY—UNPAID FEES RETAINED—PROPOSED DINNER TO BRET HARTE.

(FROM THE REGULAR CORRESPONDENT OF THE TRIBUNE.)

LONDON, Feb. 20.—It is a pity the Zulus do not see the English papers regularly. The savage has a natural taste for fuss and feathers, and would be flattered by the amount of attention bestowed by these journals on Zulu affairs. Four or five columns a day in big type seem to be none too many for the appetite of the British public. These long accounts are, for the most part, devoted to technical and professional details; to the selection of regiments, and of transports to carry them, with full descriptions of each body of troops, of their officers, their equipment, their former services, the very fittings of the ships, and the quantity of raisins they carry for the making of plum duff, and the number of bottles of wine for the officers and barrels of beer for the men. Yesterday two regiments actually embarked—on at Southampton, the other at Gravesend. Last the enthusiasm might not be up to the Zingo mark, the trumpet was blown loudly in the morning papers of yesterday, summoning the English people to witness such a spectacle as had not before been seen by this generation—the spectacle of a British force sailing away from home to retrieve a British disaster. Well, I don't know that too much is made of it. The very shrewd conductors of these Zingo papers know what interests their readers, and what brings fresh buyers for their sheets. The interest in the Zulu business, which was very slight before news of the destruction of the 24th Regiment arrived, has been very great and general since, and at times becomes intense. Among soldiers, the view is a professional one. It is "service," and they are one and all eager to be ordered away. This is true of officers and men alike. There are plenty of volunteers for the rank and file; in some cases, corporals and sergeants are said to have sacrificed their stripes in order to be transferred into a marching regiment. It is true, nevertheless, that old officers shake their heads over the condition of the troops who are going, and, in some cases, over the choice of the regiments. The two cavalry regiments are criticised most sharply of all. What is wanted in South Africa is light cavalry that can get over the most ground in the least time, and do continual scouting work without being the worse for it. But the Lancers and King's Dragon Guards are two of the heaviest bodies of horse in the army. Routine did it. They stood next on the roster for foreign service. In the infantry the number of weedy recruits, of mere boys without knowledge of their business, and without physical stamina for the hard work before them, is very large indeed. An officer who has seen service and won fame in the Crimea and in India was describing to me, the other day, the state of a regiment he had just been inspecting. Hardly a competent non-commissioned officer to the whole force, he said, nor the material for making one. The men were young, narrow-chested, pale-faced, and absolutely without experience in the field. A great part of them had not even been with the colors long enough to look like soldiers.

"A little hardship would soon knock them over," he said. As for the officers, he knew of but one or two who had much proficiency in command. Many of them were fine fellows; for they were fine fine soldiers.

And one hears good things of the three Generals who go out to take command under Lord Chelmsford. It is a business of life and death—of other men's lives and deaths also—but the usual influences have prevailed at the Horse Guards. Red tape makes mischief in the choice of troops, and favoritism makes mischief in the choice of commanding officers. General Newdegate, General Crealock, and General Marshall are one and all men of no practical acquaintance with campaigning, but of high social position and kinship. Not one of them has seen service. Two of them are Aldershot Staff officers; the third is a Guardsman. They have never, I hear, commanded troops at all, even on parade; or not more than a battalion. Yet the army list is crowded with the names of general officers who have learnt war in the Crimea and in India, and who have at least seen something of marching and campaigning of a certain sort in Abyssinia, and in Ashantee. It is said few of them could be sent to Natal because they are seniors to Lord Chelmsford, and so could not serve under him. Lord Chelmsford is one of the youngest Generals in the service. He is a pet of Lord Beaconsfield, and was pitched forward over the heads of his seniors into this South African command to win easy glory in a "little war." The little war turns out rather a big one; the glory is yet to win; a great disaster has already resulted from official incompetence; but the system is persevered in.

Not to trouble you with extracts from the Zulu blue-book—published, as usual with this Government, when it is too late for the mischief they have enticed on to be stopped—I will quote instead, an extract or two from the letters of an officer now in the field. They are written to his family, and are without pretence, but they afford a glimpse of the opinion formed on the spot. The dates are of the end of December and the beginning of January.

As to the war, I am going to make a somewhat important remark. We want to make a new campaign in South Africa that is worth making. Of course this has nothing to do with Zululand. Our notions of the war, as it is, are based on a very simple basis on our desire for the advancement of Christianity and civilization. The real reason for this war is because here we have a powerful nation of savages on our border, whose trade has been a war. They have not been able to carry on this trade for the last few years on account of not having any one to fight against. We have a sword action that their next object for "trade" will be our colonies out here, and I suppose we are bound to trust to our own arms. But after what I have seen of the colonies and the sentiments I have read in their papers, I am not very keen. We have asked the Zulus why they keep an army when all around are peaceful, and why they are so ready to fight, and have ended up by saying that they are not ready to fight.

I myself give a good deal of credit for more good sense than I have a right to in the present war. Zululand, as it is, is a very likely. A colonist with much useful information tells me that, if we are forced to fight, we are going to make them disintegrate. They will fight, but for nothing else. Zululand soldiers differ from their own men. They are not the same as the Zulus. They are men who have been with the Zulus for some time, and we are men whom the Zulus look on as much better as we can. Always eager to fight, when we have killed the enemy we immediately lay our coats in his blood; hence

For a week or two past a report has been circulated that a newly-made judge had persisted in keeping unpermitted fees which he had received in advance for services to be performed at the bar—services which, when raised to the bench, he was no longer able to render. Sir James Stephen, the most recently appointed of the new judges, now comes forward to deny that he is the person referred to. He admits that, so far as he is concerned, the story is not true, that he knows nothing whatever of any such transaction, and that nothing of the kind has taken place, or can take place, between himself and any of his former clients. Sir James Stephen may be justified in publishing this contradiction if, as he says he has been told, it was commonly believed that he was the judge in question. But it puts other new judges in the position of being compelled to make the same denial, or of having the charge fastened on some one of them. Sir James Stephen implicitly condemns the act which he denies. Whether the bar as a whole would condemn it may be doubted. It is certain that some leading barristers are in the habit of receiving fees for work which they do not perform; and, in some cases, for work which they had no probable expectation of being able to perform. Whether it be other business at the bar, or promotion to judicial offices on the bench, that obliges them to neglect their clients' interests, matters little to the clients. The clients pay their money and get nothing for it. The barrister takes the money and gives nothing in return. This practice is not only followed but boldly defended by some of the most eminent men

at the bar. Our countryman, Mr. Benjamin, who now stands quite at the head of commercial lawyers in England, has incurred some reproach from his brethren for returning fees in cases where he could not appear. I should say it was most honorable to him, if it were not a matter of simple honesty. In any case he deserves great credit for following the dictates of his conscience, instead of a corrupt professional precedent.

A proposal for a dinner to Mr. Bret Harte has been made public in the society journal which Mr. Edmund Yates owns and edits. "The date has been fixed for Saturday, the 15th of March next," says Mr. Yates; "and the chair will be taken by the Earl of Rosbery." A circular repeating these statements has been sent round to gentlemen whose names are desired on the committee; and a list of acceptances is heretofore to be published. "This entertainment," it is further said, "is designed as a welcome to Mr. Bret Harte, and an acknowledgment of the delightful which his writings have given to the English reading public." These announcements are calculated to give rise to reflections, which shall, however, be suppressed until further particulars are known. Mr. Bret Harte has left London for Croft. Whether he has pledged himself to return, and to accept the dinner which Mr. Yates offers him, I cannot say, though that would be the natural inference from the statements above quoted. G. W. S.

POLITICAL INCIDENTS.

A KING BADLY ROUTED.

LISTEN COUNTY COMPLETELY REVOLUTIONIZED—A LARGE REPUBLICAN MAJORITY—ONLY TWO OF THE OLD KING LEFT.

(BY TELEGRAPH TO THE TRIBUNE.)

ROUNDTOP, N. Y., March 5.—The election yesterday resulted in the complete overthrow of the King. The Board of Supervisors, which contained last year eleven Democrats and eight Republicans, is now composed of fourteen Republicans, five Democrats and three Taxpayers or Independents, with one town yet to hear from and two vacancies to be filled. The Board, as far as elected, is as follows: The City of Kingston—Robert Langhans, John R. Stephens and John W. Weber, Republicans; James I. O'Neill, Warren Chipm and Johnson McCalland, Democrats.

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